

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 2830

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR CY TU

SUBJECT: MIXED REACTION TO DENKTASH'S UDI THREATS

REF: A. ANKARA 7185

B. NICOSIA 2812

1. SUMMARY: REACTION OF TURK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY TO DENKTASH REQUEST FOR UDI AUTHORITY HAS BEEN MIXED, PARTICULARLY FOLLOWING ECEVIT'S COMMENTS ON UDI. OPPOSITION PARTY HAS DECLARED UDI MOVE "UNTIMELY AND HARMFUL." DENKTASH CONTINUES TO PRESS STRONGLY FOR UDI AKOHOSTY BUT HIS TONE NOW SOMEWHAT DEFENSIVE. CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY NOW DEBATING UDI ISSUE IN CLOSED SESSION. END SUMMARY.

2. COMMENTS OF REPUBLIC PEOPLES PARTY CHAIRMAN ECEVIT (REF A), COOL REACTION OF PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL, AND ADVERSE INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE HAS STIRRED DOUBTS WITHIN TURK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY AS TO WISDOM OF UDI MOVE NOW BEING URGED BY TURK CYPRIOT LEADER DENKTASH. CRITICISM HAS BEEN BOTH ON PROCEDURAL AND SUBSTANTIVE GROUNDS. CRITICS ARGUE THAT DENKTASH SHOULD NOT HAVE MADE PUBLIC THREAT REGARDING

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UDI WITHOUT FIRST CONSULTING TURK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY AND THAT

AUTHORITY TO DECLARE INDEPENDENCE COULD NOT BE ENTRUSTED TO ONE MAN BUT HAD TO BE PUT BEFORE PEOPLE IN REFERENDUM. ON SUBSTANCE, CRITICS HAVE TAKEN CUE FROM ECEVIT, AND ARGUE THAT UDI WOULD LEAD TO ENOSIS, GREEK CONTROL OVER BULK OF ISLAND, NEW SECURITY THREAT TO TURKEY FROM THE SOUTH, AND INCREASED INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE FOR CONCESSIONS.

3. OPPOSITION (POPULAR PARTY) LEADER ORHON, FOLLOWING MEETING WITH DENKTASH, HAS STEPPED UP EARLIER CRITICISM OF DENKTASH MOVE (SEE REF B) AND ANNOUNCED HIS PARTY'S VIEW THAT UDI WOULD BE "UNTIMELY AND HARMFUL" TO THE INTERESTS AND SECURITY OF TURKEY AND TURK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY. ORHON ALSO REITERATED THAT UDI DECISION, IF IT WERE TO BE TAKEN, WOULD REQUIRE TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AS WELL AS PUBLIC REFERENDUM. IN ADDITION, SEVERAL SMALL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

TEACHERS' UNION, CIVIL SERVANTS UNION, MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY GRADUATES' ASSOCIATION HAVE VOICED OPPOSITION TO INDEPENDENCE.

4. DENKTASH, WHO SEEMS NOT TO HAVE ANTICIPATED DEPTH OF REACTION, IS CONTINUING TO PRESS STRONGLY FOR UDI AUTHORITY AS MEANS OF PROTECTING TURK CYPRIOTS' RIGHTS AND OF WARNING GREEKS FROM HOSTILE ACTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL ARENA. HIS TONE, HOWEVER, NOW SOMEWHAT DEFENSIVE. THUS, IN FACE OF ECEVIT'S WORRIES ABOUT DANGERS OF PARTITION, DENKTASH HAS BEEN AT PAINS TO EMPHASIZE THAT INDEPENDENCE "DOES NOT MEAN

PARTITION." "THOSE WHO TRY TO ESTABLISH A LINK BETWEEN OUR STEPS TOWARD INDEPENDENCE AND A GREEK MOVE TO ANNEX THE GREEK PORTION OF THE ISLAND FORGET THAT OUR INDEPENDENCE WOULD BE AN INTERNAL RESTRUCTURING OF ONE OF THE TWO NATIONAL COMMUNITIES ON CYPRUS AND THAT THIS INDEPENDENCE WOULD LAY THE BASIS FOR A CONFEDERATED STATE PROTECTING THE INDEPENDENCE AND NON-ALIGNMENT OF CYPRUS AS A WHOLE."

5. IN THIS REGARD, DENKTASH ALSO EMPHASIZING THAT IN ASKING FOR UDI AUTHORITY, HE NOT SAYING THAT INDEPENDENCE WOULD BE DECLARED ON GIVEN DATE. RATHER, SUCH A STEP WOULD BE TAKEN
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ONLY IF GREEKS, BY THEIR CONTINUING ACTIONS, PUSHED TURK CYPRIOTS INTO TAKING IT. SIMILARLY, TO CHARGES THAT UDI DECISION TOO IMPORTANT TO BE ENTRUSTED TO ONE MAN, DENKTASH SAID HE BELIEVED HIS VIEW REPRESENTED VIEW OF PEOPLE AS A WHOLE BUT CONCEDED THAT IF THERE APPEARED TO BE WIDESPREAD DISAGREEMENT WITHIN COMMUNITY OR WITH POLITICAL PARTIES IN TURKEY, REFERENDUM MIGHT BE NECESSARY.

6. COMMENT: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY NOW (SEPT 22) DEBATING UDI ISSUE IN CLOSED SESSION. GIVEN DEGREE OF SUPPORT FOR DENKTASH WITHIN COMMUNITY AND ASSEMBLY AS WELL AS EMBARRASSMENT TO DENKTASH DOMESTICALLY AND TO TURK CYPRIOTS INTERNATIONALLY THAT REFUSAL TO GRANT UDI AUTHORITY WOULD CAUSE, OUR GUESS IS THAT DENKTASH WILL OBTAIN SOME KIND OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED AUTHORITY TO CALL FOR A UDI REFERENDUM IN FUTURE IF WARRANTED BY EVENTS. REGARDLESS OF OUTCOME, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT DENKTASH HAS OVERPLAYED HIS HAND, EXPOSED HIMSELF AND TURK CYPRIOT COMMUNITY TO UNNECESSARY CRITICISM, AND ISOLATED HIMSELF (ON THIS ISSUE) FROM MAINSTREAM TURKISH POLITICAL THINKING.
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